

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MADRID 10230 061724Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 EB-08 AGRE-00 TRSE-00
OES-09 DLOS-09 OMB-01 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
SS-15 ICA-11 /125 W
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5994
INFO USINT HAVANA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 10230

E.O.11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PEPR, SP, CU
SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER OREJA'S VISIT TO CUBA

REF: STATE 223446

1. GREATLY APPRECIATE REFTEL WHICH WAS VERY USEFUL FOR BRIEFING FOREIGN MINISTER OREJA PRIOR TO HIS AND PRIME MINISTER SUAREZ' DEPARTURE FOR CUBA TODAY. OREJA'S INTEREST IN THIS BRIEFING EVIDENCED BY FACT THAT HE TOOK TIME OUT FROM SCHEDULE DURING ITALIAN PRIME MINISTER ANDREOTTI'S VISIT TO RECEIVE ME FOR CONVERSATION THIS SUBJECT.

2. OREJA WAS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN CUBAN INTERNAL ECONOMIC SITUATION AND TOOK SPECIAL NOTE OF SOVIET DOLLAR 5 MILLION A DAY SUBSIDIES AND AID TO CUBA.

3. OREJA SAID SPANISH/CUBAN CONVERSATIONS WOULD FOCUS PRIMARILY ON ECONOMIC MATTERS. HE CONFIRMED THAT SPAIN HAS BEEN BUYING CUBAN SUGAR AT MORE THAN TWICE WORLD PRICE BASED ON FIVE-YEAR AGREEMENT SIGNED IN 1973. HE INDICATED SOME DISSATISFACTION WITH THAT ARRANGEMENT AND SAID
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MADRID 10230 061724Z

IT WOULD BE DISCUSSED DURING VISIT. HE CONFIRMED ALSO THAT TRADE WITH CUBA WAS SIZEABLE AND THAT SPAIN HOPED FOR INCREASE AS WELL AS SOME COOPERATION IN AREA OF FISHING.

4. OREJA SAID ONE DIFFICULT PROBLEM TO BE DISCUSSED CONCERNS INDEMNIZATION FOR SPANISH-OWNED PROPERTIES SEIZED BY CUBA. UNDOCUMENTED SPANISH CLAIMS AMOUNT TO

ABOUT DOLLARS 150 MILLION, WHILE CUBA HAS INDICATED WILLINGNESS TO PAY APPROXIMATELY DOLLARS 20 MILLION WHICH SPAIN FINDS UNACCEPTABLE.

5. OREJA ALSO TOOK NOTE OF THE INFORMATION CONCERNING CUBAN TROOPS IN AFRICA AS WELL AS EXPECTED RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS AND INDICATED THAT HE WOULD RECOMMEND THAT PRIME MINISTER SUAREZ RAISE THESE MATTERS DURING CONVERSATIONS WITH CASTRO.

6. OREJA NOTED THAT CUBA IS ESPECIALLY CONCERNED NOW WITH PREPARATION FOR NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT MEETING IN HAVANA NEXT SEPTEMBER. SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THAT CUBAN CABINET MINISTERS WOULD PERSONALLY TAKE 87 LETTERS SIGNED BY CASTRO TO VARIOUS HEADS OF STATE INVITING THEM TO ATTEND. HE ALSO HAD BEEN TOLD THAT CUBA WAS PLANNING TO BUILD 60 HOUSES TO ADD TO EXISTING 30 TO ACCOMMODATE HEADS OF STATE. HE WONDERED HOW AN ECONOMY IN SUCH POOR SHAPE COULD ENGAGE IN THESE EXPENDITURES. HE EXPECTED THAT DISCUSSION OF THE NON-ALIGNED GROUPING WOULD BE A MATTER OF INTEREST DURING SUAREZ' VISIT.

7. OREJA PROMISED TO PASS ON BRIEFING INFORMATION TO PRIME MINISTER SUAREZ AND TO GET IN TOUCH WITH ME ON HIS RETURN FROM CUBA TO BRIEF ME ON OUTCOME OF VISIT.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 MADRID 10230 061724Z

8. OREJA EVIDENTLY GREATLY APPRECIATED THE BRIEFING WHICH HELPED TO CONVEY SENSE OF OUR WILLINGNESS TO TREAT SPAIN AS A SERIOUS PARTNER. TODMAN

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